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House and Herrman. The 134th anniversary of the birth of the Stars and Stripes was observed by the Government departments, patriotic societies and schools throughout the District last Wednesday.

Wilberforce Orchestra. The finest orchestra in the city is the Wilberforce. It is composed of educated young men, studying professions. The music by this orchestra is first class. You should hear it.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE NEGRO.

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, April 17, 18 and 19, 1912.

For some years past I have had in mind to invite here from different parts of the world—from Europe, Africa, the West Indies and North and South America—persons who are actively interested or directly engaged as missionaries, or otherwise, in the work that is going on in Africa and elsewhere for the education and up-building of Negro peoples. For this purpose it has been determined to hold at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, April 17, 18 and 19, 1912, a little more than a year from this time, an international conference on the Negro. Such a conference as this will offer the opportunity for those engaged in any kind of service in Africa, or the countries above mentioned, to become more intimately acquainted with the work and the problems of Africa and these other countries. Such a meeting will be valuable and helpful, also, in so far as it will give opportunity for a general interchange of ideas in organizing and systematizing the work of education of the native peoples in Africa and elsewhere and the preparation of teachers for that work. Wider knowledge of the work that each is doing should open means of co-operation that do not now exist. The object of calling this conference at Tuskegee Institute is to afford an opportunity for studying the

methods employed in helping the Negro people of the United States, with a view of deciding to what extent Tuskegee and Hampton methods may be applied to conditions in these countries, as well as to conditions in Africa.

It is hoped that numbers of people representing the different governments interested in Africa and the West Indies, as well as representatives from the United States and the countries of South America, will decide to attend this conference. Especially is it urged that missionary and other workers in these various countries be present and take an active part in the deliberations of the conference.

It is desirable, in any case, to have any suggestions as to what might be done to make the work of the conference more helpful to all concerned. The names of persons who would like to be present, with whom you are acquainted, will be appreciated, and through you they are invited to be present and take part in the deliberations of the conference.

Those who come to Tuskegee properly accredited will be welcomed and entertained as guests of the institution, and will be under no expense during their stay here. BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, Principal, Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama.

Elephant Threnodies. The natives of certain portions of south central Africa, says the Duchess of Aosta in Harper's Weekly, look on the death of an elephant as an event. They attach an almost religious aspect to it. "As soon as the animal stalked is stretched out on the ground the hunters climb upon the huge, still warm body and there perform a dance, gesticulating and shaking their guns, accompanied by a sort of litany, in which they extol the animal and his qualities, his strength, his size, his cunning; then they praise the skill of the hunter, his prompt eye, his accurate shot. And this song is just murmured, as if they were afraid that if they raised their voices they would attract the curse of the spirit which has just left the animal and is still floating round him."

How Parchment Came to Be Used. When the literary jealousy of the Egyptians caused them to stop the supply of papyrus, the king of Pergamos, a city in Asia Minor, introduced the use of sheepskin in a form called, from the place of its invention, parchment, whence our word parchment is believed to be derived. Vellum, a finer article, made from calfskin, was also used. Many of the books done on vellum in the middle ages were transcribed by monks, and often it took years to complete a single copy.

Proof. "I'm after the gas bill." "Gee! My husband forgot to leave the check—he's just gone." "Are you sure he forgot to leave it?" "Yes; he told me so just as he went."—Cleveland Leader.

One of Many. "Then you think you won no permanent place in her heart?" "I'm just a notch on her parasol handle; that is all."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

High Art. "Are you blind, prisoner?" inquired the magistrate. "Yes, your worship." "You are charged with vagrancy. How did you lose your sight?" "By a fit of applepox, sir." "But there is a picture on your breast representing an explosion in a mine, through which, it is stated, you became blind. How is this?" "Please, your worship, I couldn't afford to pay a artist as could paint applepox."—London Answers.

Where the Trouble Was. "Some mis'bul sinner took an' turned off wid de collection hat las' meetin' day," said Brother Dickey, "an' I well knows dat ef dar was no sich place ef hell de good Lawd would make on for dat sinner." "Was there much money in the hat?" "No, suh; day warn't so much ez brass button in it." "Then why are you so mad about it?" "Hit wuz my hat," he said.—Atlanta Constitution.

NOISE OF THUNDER.

Professor Trowbridge Declares That It Is Due to Heating of Gases Along the Line of Electric Discharge.

To Professor Trowbridge we owe an experiment to explain the noise of thunder. It has usually been thought that the noise is caused by the closing up of the vacuum created by the passage of lightning, the air rushing in from all sides with a clap, but the intensity of the noise is rather disproportionate, and it is now supposed that the thunder is due to the intense heating of the gases, especially the gas of water vapor along the line of the electric discharge, and the consequent conversion of suspended moisture into steam at enormous pressure.

In this way the crackle with which a peal of thunder sometimes begins might be regarded as the sound of steam explosions on a small scale, caused by inductive discharges before the main flash. The rumble would be the overlapping steam explosions, and the final clap, which soundest loudest, would be the steam explosion nearest to the auditor. In the case of rumbling thunder the lightning is passing from cloud to cloud. When the flash passes from the earth to the clouds the clap is loudest at the beginning.

Professor Trowbridge gave substance to these suppositions by causing electric flashes to pass from point to point through terminals clothed in soaked cotton wool, and he succeeded in magnifying the crack of the electric spark to a terrifying extent.—London Graphic.

THE BIG DIPPER.

It is the Hour Hand of the Woodman's Celestial Clock.

The pole star is really the most important of the stars in our sky. It marks the north at all times. It alone is fixed in the heavens. All the other stars seem to swing around it once in twenty-four hours.

But the pole star of Polaris is not a very bright one, and it would be hard to identify but for the help of the so called pointers in the "Big Dipper," or "Great Bear." The outer rim of the dipper points nearly to Polaris at a distance equal to three times the space that separates the two stars of the dipper's outer side. Various Indians called the pole star the "Home Star" and the "Star That Never Moves," and the dipper they call the "Broken Back." The "Great Bear" is also to be remembered as the pointers for another reason. It is the hour hand of the woodman's clock. It goes once around the north star in about twenty-four hours, the reverse way of the hands of a watch—that is, it goes the same way as the sun—and for the same reason—that it is the earth that is going and leaving them behind.—Country Life In America.

A Blow Arrested.

An organizer who on the eve of a festival was taken suddenly ill secured a deputy to take his place. The deputy, on the authority of St. James' Budget, was a gentleman who played a very full organ, playing full chords where his principal played only single notes, and consequently using a much larger quantity of wind.

When about three parts through with the "Hallelujah Chorus" the wind suddenly gave out. Going round to the back of the organ to ascertain the reason, the deputy found the blower in the act of putting on his coat preparatory to going home.

"What do you mean by such behavior?" the deputy angrily expostulated. "Look here, sir," the blower returned with warmth, "if you think I don't know 'ow many puffs it takes to blow the 'Alleluiah Chorus' you make a big mistake!"

Helped the Thief.

"A simple, honest Scotch farmer had taken a sack of meal to dispose of in Aberdeen cattle market," says Mrs. Mayo in her "Recollections of Fifty Years." "It was in the days when people were hanged for any petty theft, and an execution was in progress, the culprit being a sheep stealer. The worthy countryman stood aghast when a stranger bustled up with the question: "'What's a-do?' "'A hanging,' said the other, awed, 'for stealing a sheep.' "'Eh, what won't folks risk for gear!' cried the stranger. 'Will ye just give me a hand up with this sack?' 'The farmer promptly complied. It was only afterward that he discovered he had helped a thief to make off with the sack of meal he had brought to sell!"

Force of an Oil Well.

Oil has been ejected from the Baku wells with such force and accompanied with so much sand that steel blocks twelve inches thick placed over the mouth of the well to deflect the flow were perforated in a few hours and had to be replaced. The casing with which the wells were lined was often torn to shreds and eventually collapsed, and hundreds of thousands of tons of sand which accumulated in the vicinity necessitated the services of large bodies of workmen.—London Mail.

A Safe Bet.

A man can never guess how big the hats or sleeves or skirts of women will be next season, but he stands ready to bet that no fashion center can make big shoes for women popular.—Atchison Globe.

"The easiest thing I know of," says the philosopher of folly, "is to begin to save up some money next month."—Cleveland Leader.

FUN IN THE HOME.

Bring to It Bright Pictures and Pleasant Thoughts and Bar Out Business Worries.

Whatever your lot in life, keep joy with you, says Orison Swett Marden in Success Magazine. It is a great healer. Sorrow, worry, jealousy, envy, bad temper, create friction and grind away the delicate human machinery so that the brain loses its cunning.

Half the misery in the world would be avoided if the people would make a business of having plenty of fun at home instead of running everywhere else in search of it.

"Now For Rest and Fun." "No Business Troubles Allowed Here." These are good home building mottoes.

When you have had a perplexing day, when things have gone wrong with you and you go home at night exhausted, discouraged, blue, instead of making your home miserable by going over your troubles and trials just bury them. Instead of dragging them home and making yourself and your family unhappy with them and spoiling the whole evening, just lock everything that is disagreeable in your office.

Just resolve that your home shall be a place for bright pictures and pleasant memories, kindly feelings toward everybody and "a corking good time" generally. If you do this you will be surprised to see how your vocation or business wrinkles will be ironed out in the morning and how the crooked things will be straightened.

THE COTTON GIN.

Whitney Got the Idea From the Work of an Old Negro.

Eli Whitney, the inventor of the cotton gin, got the germ of his great idea from seeing through the interstices of a but an old negro work a hand saw among the freshly picked cotton stored within.

The teeth of the saw were the lint from the seed easily and quickly, and young Whitney (he was barely thirteen at the time) realized at once that a machine working a number of similar saws simultaneously would revolutionize the cotton growing industry.

He said nothing to anybody, but set to work building models and experimenting. His difficulties were enormous, for he not only had to make his own wheels, cogs, etc., but he had also first to forge his own tools and even to manufacture the paint wherewith to color his many plans and drawings. But he succeeded in the end, and, though the outbreak of war and other hindrances prevented the invention from being actually placed upon the market until many years afterward, the first complete cotton gin ever constructed was built from those very models and plans and with scarcely a single alteration.

The Springbok.

A peculiarity of that most beautiful of South African antelopes the springbok is that it always leaps over human tracks. It is at once exceedingly shy and marvelously active, and the reason for this strange antic is its intense suspicion of any possible enemies, among whom it has come to recognize man as the most dangerous. It is not only with human tracks that the springbok goes through this performance, for it does the same with the tracks of lions or even when it gets wind of a lion. The leap is exceedingly graceful, and the animal covers from twelve to fifteen feet at each bound. It drops on all four feet at once and immediately rises again, making a clear spring without any run. Its usual gait when not pursued is a light springy trot. The springbok usually travels with its nose to the ground, as if constantly on the lookout for the scent of enemies.

A Mole's Nest.

Among common animals few have been less studied in their life history than the mole. Mr. Lionel E. Adams says that under the "fortress" which the mole constructs above the surface of the ground will always be found a series of tunnels running out beneath the adjacent field. A curious feature almost invariably found is a perpendicular run penetrating about a foot below the bottom of the nest and then turning upward to meet another run. A mole is never found in his nest, although it may yet be warm from his body when opened. Guided by smell and hearing, a mole frequently locates the nest of a partridge or pheasant above his run and, penetrating it from below, eats the eggs. The adult mole is practically blind, but there are embryonic indications that the power of sight in the race has deteriorated.

A Japanese Peculiarity.

"When a Japanese servant is rebuked or scolded," says a traveler, "he must smile like a Cheshire cat. The etiquette in smiles is very misleading at first. I often used to think that Taki my riksha 'boy,' meant to be impertinent when he insisted on smiling when I was angry at him. But when he told me of the death of his little child with a burst of laughter I knew that this was only one of the curious details of etiquette in this topsy turvy land."

One Definition.

"Papa," asked a little boy, "what is a legal blank?" "A legal blank, Johnny," replied his father, "is a lawyer who never gets a case."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Flight.

"Would you take \$10,000 to fly from Albany to New York?" "Why not? Our cashier took only \$1,600 to fly to Europe."

ADAM'S PEAK.

A Shrine Visited by Thousands and Sacred to Three Conflicting Religious Sects.

Throughout Asia "holy places" are almost as numerous as leaves on a tree, but in Ceylon is a mountain which enjoys the unique distinction of being a very holy place to the devotees of three absolutely distinct and conflicting religious sects. This is Adam's Peak, or Samanala.

According to the Mohammedan belief, Adam, after the fall, was taken by an angel to the top of Samanala, and a panorama of all the ills that through sin should afflict mankind was spread out before him. His foot left an impression on the solid rock, and his tears formed the lake from which pilgrims still drink. The Buddhists contend that it was not Adam, but Buddha himself that made the footprint in the rock, that being the last spot where he touched the earth before ascending to heaven, while the Brahmans have still another legend. All, however, Brahmans, Mohammedans and Chinese, agree that Samanala is a very holy place, and to perform a pilgrimage to the spot is to the Buddhist what a visit to Mecca is to a Mohammedan. In mixed crowds the worshippers come, each pitying the ignorance of the other, who is so far from the "true way."

It requires no little faith and some imagination to trace in the depression in the rock the likeness of a human footprint. It is 5 1/4 feet long by 2 1/4 feet wide, on the top of a huge boulder. The natives, however, insist that it is the footprint of Adam.—Emmett Campbell Hall in Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

MINIATURE GARDENS.

Tiny Lakes, Trees and Houses in Diminutive Japanese Parks.

The Japanese have the art of dwarfing trees to mere shrubs and of cultivating plants in a similar way. The people take great delight in their miniature gardens, which require a special gardener to keep them down to desired limits. A Japanese garden is generally about ten yards square, and in this small space is found a park and a demesne, with lake, summer houses, temples, trees, all complete and in keeping with the dimensions available.

One such garden shows a lake four feet long and full of goldfish. On the border stands a pine tree exactly eighteen inches high and fifty years old. Beneath its shade is a temple carved out of one piece of stone the size of a brick. On a lofty crag of some two and a half feet stands a fine maple tree, perfect in form and shape, fifteen years old and twelve inches high.

One household in Japan boasts of a complete garden contained in a shallow two dozen wine case. Everything is complete down to the fish in the lake, a sheet of water only a few inch square, and the footbridges over the water courses. Tea houses there are and numerous trees of various kinds, each about six inches in height. Old as the hills are these diminutive trees, but full of vitality, and yet never growing bigger.—New York Press.

One Consolation.

During the time he acted as United States consul in Glasgow Bret Harte occasionally indulged in a day's sport with the gun, and it was during one of his shooting excursions that the humorist met with an accident which might have disfigured him for the remainder of his life, his face being badly cut through the recoil of an overloaded gun. Fortunately the doctor's skill prevented him from being permanently marked.

Writing about the occurrence to his friend, T. Edgar Pemberton, who quotes the letter in his "Tribute to Bret Harte," the novelist concludes his letter by telling of an amusing effort which was made to console him on account of the accident.

"When the surgeon was stitching me together," he wrote, "the son of the house, a boy of twelve, came timidly to the door of my room. "'Tell Mr. Bret Harte it's all right,' he said. 'He killed the hare.'"

Artificial Flowers.

It was in Italy that a demand for artificial flowers first arose. This was due primarily to a caprice of fashion which demanded that during festivals blossoms in and out of their seasons should be worn and also to the fact that their color and freshness were stable. Later on, in the middle ages, the artificial so far superseded the natural that both men and women decked their heads with imitation flowers of cambric, paper, glass and metal.

Spiteful.

At a local picture show a painter hung a notice under his highly prized landscape, "Do not touch with canes or umbrellas." Some one who was not an admirer of his works added to the notice, "Take an ax!"

Disagreeable Economy.

Husband—You are not economical. Wife—Well, if you don't call a woman economical who saves her wedding dress for a possible second marriage I'd like to know what you think economical is like.

An Inside Outing.

Wigg—The best outing a man can take is an ocean trip. Wagg—Yes, an outing for the inner man as well.—Philadelphia Record.

To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.—Campbell.

PICKING HUSBANDS.

A Woman's Cynical View of the German Marriage Market, Where Men Wait to Be Purchased.

The men in Germany do not marry. They are married. They are more or less passive articles of sale, which stand in rows in the matrimonial shop window with their price labeled in large letters in their buttonhole, waiting patiently for a purchaser. They are perfectly willing, even eager, victims. They want to be bought, but their position does not allow them to grasp the initiative, and they are thankful when at last some one comes along and declares herself capable and willing to pay the price.

The girl and her mother, with their purse in hand, pass the articles in review and choose out the one which best suits their means and fancy.

"I shall marry an officer," one girl told me some time ago with the easy confidence of a person about to order a new dress, and, lo and behold, before the year was out she was walking proudly on the arm of a dragon lieutenant! I even knew of three women who swore to each other that they would marry only geniuses, and here also they had their will. One married a great painter, one a poet and another a famous diplomatist. That they were all three peculiarly unhappy is not a witness against the system, but a proof that geniuses may occasionally be very uncomfortable partners. In this case the purchasers were rich and popular and could therefore make their choice. Others of lesser means would have had to content themselves with an officer, cavalry or infantry, according to the "dot," or a lawyer, or a doctor, or a merchant, and so on down the scale.—Miss Wylie's "My German Year."

ODDLY EXPRESSED.

Queer Ways In Which Ideas Are Sometimes Put Into Words.

Curious ways of expressing ideas in English may be expected from foreigners, as, for instance, when the Frenchman, who made a call in the country and was about to be introduced to the family, said: "Ah, ze ladies! Zen I would before, if you please, wish to purify mine 'ands and to sweep mine hair."

A Scotch publican was complaining of his servant maid. He said that she could never be found when wanted. "She'll gang out o' the house," he said, "twenty times for once she'll come in."

A countryman went to a menagerie to examine the wild beasts. Several gentlemen expressed the opinion that the orang outang was a lower order of the human species. Hodge did not like this idea and, striding up to the gentleman, expressed his contempt for it in these words: "Pooh! He's no more of the human species than I be." "Mamma, is that a spoiled child?" asked a little boy on seeing a negro baby for the first time.

A shop exhibits a card warning everybody against unscrupulous persons "who infringe our title to deceive the public." The shopman does not quite say what he means any more than the proprietor of an eating house near the dock, on the door of which may be read the following announcement conveying fearful intelligence to the galling tars who frequent this port: "Sailors' vitals cooked here."—Philadelphia North American.

Definition of True Humor.

The sense of humor is the "saving sense" principally because it saves us from ourselves. The person who cannot laugh at himself now and then is to be pitied. Moreover, the person who cannot take good naturedly the occasional bantering of others is in the same class of disagreeables. A well directed shaft of raillery will often find the vulnerable point in our armor of self complacency and show us where our self satisfaction is all wrong. True humor, however, must spring as much from the heart as from the head. Its essence must be truth and friendliness, not contempt. There never was a good joke yet that told a lie or besmirched a reputation. Humor which carries with it a sting to wound the sensitiveness or delicacy of one who does not deserve to suffer is not true humor.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Professional Instinct.

"Romeo and Juliet," with the original company, had reached its crucial moment. Juliet was staggering about the stage, regarding her afflicted lover. "Oh, cruel poison!" she wailed. She raised her lover for a moment in her arms.

A wildly excited medical student in the gallery sprang to his feet. "Keep him up, Juliet—keep him up!" he bellowed. "I'll run out and fetch the stomach pump!"

A Run of Luck.

Violet—I never had such a streak of luck. He fell in love in Paris, proposed in Rome and bought the ring in Naples. Pierrot—Did your luck end there? Violet—Oh, no! While we were at Monte Carlo he won enough from papa for us to get married on.—London Illustrated Bits.

A Misnomer.

It is becoming daily more dangerous to refer to "the weaker sex" on account of the increasing doubt in the reader's mind which sex is meant.—London Saturday Review.

The reward of one duty is the power to fulfill another.